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ABSTRACT

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A periodic activity at the University of Minnesota is a set of events labeled registration. As the University has grown in size and scope, there has been an accompanying elaboration of the mechanisms devised to accomplish the registration process. The proposed introduction of a computer to assist in this operation can be viewed as but another step in this development. However, computerization raises issues about the place of registration in the total University which should be addressed prior to an irrevocable commitment to this technique.

The process of registration is both a technical and social act. As a technical act, it is the means by which an individual and the institution agree that attendance at a specific class at a specific time will (may) take place. In addition, the process usually includes some agreement as to the amount of tuition and fees and a commitment to immediate or future payment of them. An elaborate system of exchange mechanisms to accomplish this agreement has evolved as the institution has become more complex. Both by design and chance these mechanisms have elaborated a number of overt and covert alternative routes to achieve the end goal of registration.

However, another perspective in which to view registration is that of a social act, a series of events with manifest and latent social functions. The University is composed of a number of units with varying degrees of autonomy. The cyclical nature of registration prior to the opening of every quarter requires the coalescence of units which at other times have minimal, if any, communication or active linkage. This cyclical activity

undoubtedly serves the purpose of periodically forcing social linkages which otherwise would be attenuated. At the same time, it reinforces within all concerned the idea of unit autonomy. The social linkage function is represented in a concrete way by such acts as the installation or use of special telephone lines between scheduling areas or the openings of special Bursars tables in Johnston Hall and the Architecture Court. Unit autonomy is identified openly in the blatant disjunctions between registration procedures in various units, i.e. a different alphabet for IT, giving first day preference to seniors in the School of Education, of the BA school and Anthropology departments students' having early preference over others for registration in those units' classes.

As we shall later point out, the present registration process may also have important socialization functions in teaching the student values, attitudes and techniques for survival in the reality of the University. This is not to argue that computerized registration would necessarily negate the social function of registration but rather that striving for the most efficient technical manner of handling this process may well be dysfunctional for other aspects of University life.

The definition of registration for the purposes of this study is very narrow; the process of officially enrolling in a set of classes. This somewhat artificial restriction reflects the Office of Admissions and Records' view of registration as including only course selection and assignment and determining fees. These activities are but part of the larger process of registration which includes a pre-period of decision making (both independently and with the help of advisors) about specific course content fulfilling University requirements and about personal restrictions of time and ability. In addition, a subsequent series of events dealing with the

actual payment of tuition and fees is intimately linked to this process before one is normally considered a fully registered student. A further post-period must be considered in that during the first weeks of classes, a considerable number of students are still making additions and cancellations in the courses they have selected. Given the number of individuals who make these changes, the process is not complete as long as this open-ended period exists.

A concern over limiting the interpreting of registration to a technical act and isolating it from prior and post events led this researcher to offer, and the Task Force on Computer Registration to accede to, a study of registration activities during August and September 1973.

Methodology

We were interested in how students as well as administrators perceived the process (an emic viewpoint) and in describing the process from the point of view of the outsiders' perspective (an etic viewpoint). Thus, two kinds of data were solicited: interview information elicited from students and faculty members and observation from participant observation.

Administrators and technicians responsible for registration within major units of the University were informally interviewed in late July. During the three weeks of registration, as well as the two intervening weeks prior to the opening of classes, two interviewers were placed at points where students were given fee payment statements. These locations included Morrill Hall, Johnston Hall (CLA), Architecture Court (IT), the Business Administration Tower, and Coffey Hall (St. Paul). Informants had just finished the basic registration process at that time. Interviewers used protocols containing both closed and open-ended questions. Protocols were coded and summaries computed. Permission was asked of five students for

one of our researchers to follow and record their actions during the registration process. Finally, researchers recorded events of salient interest as they spent time in the areas where registration was taking place.

The questionnaire protocol was designed to elicit responses concerning what the student recalled having done during the just completed registration process and his/her reaction to it. Because the questions were open-ended, with responses recorded by the interviewer, little if any attempt was made to reconcile inconsistencies in the responses. Some of these inconsistencies are undoubtedly a product of the ambiguity of the term "registration." The informants, for example, had varying interpretations of the component elements making up the total process called registration and thus total times reported covered varying events. This lack of congruence in definition is important in that it points up one of the difficulties in discussing problems related to registration.

Demographic characteristics of the 155 students questioned approximate the range of the U. of M. population in terms of sex and college distribution (no attempt was made to include such specialized schools as medicine or mortuary science).

A number of informants, both students and staff, felt that this study would yield atypical results, because registration during August for fall quarter was different from registration taking place at other times during the year. They felt that summer registration could proceed at a more leisurely pace because one did not have to work it in between scheduled classes. Lines did not seem to them as long this year as they remembered; classes appeared to close later than previously. Some officials suspected that the total number of students registering was down. Others felt the extension of registration to cover a three rather than a two-week

period accounted for the ease of registration. In reality, total numbers registered were quite similar to those in fall 1972. We are unable to attest to the validity of the other statements. However, they are important in our consideration of what we have come to call "the mythology of registration."

The following two cases abstracted from our field notes are illustrative of some of the problems involved and are not intended to be necessarily typical. They are presented here to give context to later discussions.

CASE I: F.P., male, 19, sophomore in pre-pharmacy, GPA 3.51 on 54 units.

> Immediately after he got his registration material on the second floor of Johnston Hall, at 11:15 a.m., I joined him. We then went to the bookstore to get a pen (he had come without one) and then on to the pharmacy department to pick up a new brochure of information (he had lost all of his materials including his pre-plan program, during the summer). Last spring, he had made out a program for the subsequent year and carried with him a permit to register during 1973-74 without an advisor's signature. "I kind of made out a schedule and he signed the card." His curriculum in pre-pharmacy is relatively structured and the only option at this point was the selection of a social science course. We proceeded at 11:30 to Fraser Hall to fill out cards and work out his schedule. The required science courses (physics, chemistry, and calculus) were easily arranged, but he found a conflict over lab periods and a desired economics class. This, however, was seen as no problem, and he resolved it by deciding that he could attend economics class every other lecture and alternately skip a lab session. "Econ was a slough-off course last year, and I can miss physics once in a while. Nineteen hours is a heavy load, but it will have to come one of these quarters anyhow." By 12:10, all cards were filled out and he had been given an advisor's assignment for the current academic year. We then proceeded to room 12 of Johnston Hall and within 7 minutes of entering the room, he had got all four necessary course cards. Because it was now 12:20 and part of the staff of the Bursar's office writing out fee payment statements had gone to lunch, the line was the longest ever observed during our research. Even so, by 12:44, one hour and thirty-nine minutes after he had begun the process, he had received his fee statement and completed registration.

Comment:

This student was singularly well-organized and able to cope with problems arising at various points along the way, although at several times he paused in confusion at what the next step might be. He was convinced that his early

registration (this was the seventh day of registration) was important in allowing him to register in such a short period of time. This might well be the case, but the inflexibility of his prescribed curriculum was also an important factor in the ease with which he registered. It is interesting to note that the flexibility that came within his program came from a judgment on the part of the student and not of the system. Had his program been more closely monitored, either by an individual or by a machine, it is possible that his registering for classes during overlapping periods of time would not have been allowed.

CASE II: D.T., male, 22, senior in philosophy

> He was first contacted as he picked up registration material. It was not his day in the alphabet for registration and it was agreed that he would allow the researcher to accompany him when he did register three days later, the twelfth day of registration. On the appointed day, he met the researcher and explained that he had been out of school for several quarters and that perhaps his case was somewhat different and would not make a typical subject. He had accumulated more than 154 hours, but was still classified as a sophomore, primarily, it would seem, because he had never completed the necessary forms to be given upper-division standing. "I don't have an advisor. I suppose I should get one as I'm about ready to graduate." Without reading his materials or checking any of the posted signs, he announced it was necessary for him to go to his department in Ford Hall to get an advisor's signature. There he told the secretary, "I don't have an advisor, but they told me in Johnston that I could come over here and get someone's signature so I could register and later you would assign me an advisor." He was told to go to a faculty member's office and there repeated the same statement. The faculty member said, "Good, I'm the only one here now, and I have all of the advisees that I can handle." He signed the card without further questioning. As we walked towards the elevator, the student gave me a large wink and in the elevator said, "It's cornball(the fabricated story) but that's the way you get things done." We then returned to Johnston Hall where he looked through the class schedule and began to arrange possible course combinations. He had some idea in mind of what he wanted to take, but it was apparent that he had spent little time in studying the catalogue or course descriptions prior to this time. The course catalogue listed a class in Middle Eastern history which was not listed on the course available list. "That's no problem. I'll just sign up and they can cross it off the list if there's something wrong." His total load was for 19 hours, and he was not sure if he was allowed to take such a load. However, "I have an advisor's signature (therefore they won't say anything)." After selecting his courses, he proceeded to 12 Johnston Hall past a sign stating that lower-division students

had to go first to Fraser Hall. The checker at the door examined his documents and sent him to Fraser. He was not particularly upset by these events, commenting that this is the way of the bureaucracy. This detour across the street to get the necessary assignment of an advisor took only five minutes. At this point, he was told that because of his accumulation of credits, he would have to file for upper division standing. He listened to the instructions but took no heed of them. Within six minutes of reentering room 12, Johnston Hall, he emerged, commenting somewhat incredulously, "They were all there--God!" The total time consumed in his registration was 51 minutes.

Comment:

This example is interesting because it is illustrative of a student who had learned to manipulate the system by circumventing the assumed rules. In this case, the journey to his department for an advisor's signature and the fabrication were totally unnecessary, but built on assumptions about the system which may have been based upon previous experience. He had assumed that the process would be time-consuming and that manipulation would be necessary. He was surprised, almost to the point of disappointment, at the ease with which he had passed through the process. "It used to be a lot easier when I had a friend in here", (class reservation office).

The two cases cited, despite divergent individuals' aims and goals, are illustrative of a number of things. First, it is apparent in both cases that the individual was able to exercise some autonomy in making decisions. Undoubtedly, had the class selection and reservation system been mechanized, this kind of manipulation and stretching of the rules would not have been possible. The pre-pharmacy student would probably not have been allowed to register for classes which met at the same hour. Although there was no objective demonstration that the philosophy student actually accomplished anything by his extra-legal activities, he clearly felt his actions gave him far more control over the situation than if he left it in the hands of someone else or with the "system". It is this personal flexibility resulting from the number of alternative routes within the present system

of registration which gives the individual a sense of personal autonomy, regardless of the polemics which emerge about the presumed indifference of the "system".

An analysis of the data indicates the need to discuss the results as a series of separate but inextricably related issues. For our purposes here the sources of our information will be indicated as emanating from three modes labeled as interviews (primarily open-ended with administrators and technicians), questionnaires (the protocol interview with students), and observations (i.e., following students, observing the reservation process).

Issue #1: Efficiency

The proposed computerized registration system is often rationalized on the basis of its imputed ability to make the registration process more efficient, e.g. less time would be required by the students to register and fewer employees would be required to manually check closed classes. Underlying this argument is the assumption that the present system is inefficient. We, therefore, were concerned with ascertaining how much time was actually spent in component aspects of registration as well as student perception of satisfaction with the process.

Insert Tables 1 and 2

Table 1 indicates the total time reported in the questionnaires to have been used for registration. Sixty percent of the 155 respondents indicated they had spent less than 3 hours, with 13% stating they needed less than one hour to complete the process. We attempted to delineate how this time was spent by asking each respondent to indicate how much time was spent in certain activities associated with registering. Responses are shown in Table 2.

While the reader may find a number of categories on the table of interest, of particular importance is that almost 60% reported they needed less

than 15 minutes to go through the class reservation process. An additional 20% reported completion within one half hour. Thus, 80% of the students completed what is reputed to be a lengthy process within one half hour. This is the activity which the proposed computerized registration is said to be able to speed up.

For the 33% who said they required more than 15 minutes to get the basic materials for registration, the chief reasons were that a hold had been placed on their materials, or that more than one quarter had elapsed since previous registration. Consequently it was necessary to go to appropriate offices to pay overdue assessments or clarify whatever difficulty caused the delay in normal registration sequence. For those who did not register during the previous quarter permits have to be obtained in Morrill Hall rather than in the College offices. Other activities did not appear to occupy significant specific amounts of time.

A frequent criticism is heard from students that seeing an advisor consumes a great portion of their registration time. However, 38% of the respondents did not report seeing an advisor at all. This may be explainable in that registration for fall quarter takes place when fewer faculty advisors are present. However, during the past few years, several of the major collegiate units have relaxed rules concerning student use of advisors, sometimes nearly eliminating the requirement altogether, and this may be reflected in the number who registered without consulting an advisor during this registration period.

Thirty-five percent indicated they registered for courses outside their collegiate unit. Approximately half of these persons were able to accomplish registration through available technology within their own units (CLA, for example, sends IT a number of registration cards of classes of potential interest to IT students and vice versa.) Only 8 students (6.5% of the sample) indicated any difficulty in accomplishing cross registration between collegiate units.

Approximately two thirds of our sample was able to enroll in a program composed entirely of courses they had originally desired to take. However, an additional 20% said that the substitution was a course they also desired to have, indicating at least at that point in time, only 15% remained potentially dissatisfied. Of this group, we do not know how many simply failed to replace the course they were unable to take.

Insert Table 3

Table 3 indicates major categories of reasons for inability to get a desired class. As might be expected, the major reason was that a particular class was closed. An analysis of the response on a weekly basis indicates that the same order of reasons existed each week. (The first class closure, one in studio arts, was posted within 30 minutes of the first day of registration.)

Students who took unusual amounts of time to register were those with special kinds of problems. These may be both those problems emanating from bureaucratic regulation, e.g. holds placed on records for past problems, and those stemming from a desire to take unusual course combinations, especially classes outside their own collegial unit. All data sources indicated that a student following a traditional pattern could almost invariably register with minimal amount of time and frustration.

Two conclusions might be drawn from our data. First, a more mechanistic approach to registration, i.e. computerization, will by the nature of its operation lead to more rigidity in the registration process. The present system has a high input of human decision-making on both the part of the student as well as the clerical processers. Presently many kinds of alternatives are possible in finding suitable course combinations, even those which are supposedly in violation of regulations. Given the ease with which most students currently arrange schedules,

it seems dubious that any method of computer system developed would speed up the process for the majority of students. It is more likely that it would preclude exercising many of the alternatives that are presently exploited by them to achieve their goals.

Secondly, as the number involved in programs of a non-traditional nature increases (Bachelor of Elected Studies, for example,) we can anticipate more special cases that need individual attention and adjudication. Whatever costs in manpower are saved by computerization will possibly be lost in personnel necessary to handle increased adjudicatory case loads. Those student programs now easily handled would be with equal care handled by a computerized system. However, a more mechanistic system would probably work to the disadvantage of those who now have difficulties by increasing the number of problem cases that must be resolved on an individual basis. All would be competing for the limited amount of personnel time now available for special problem cases.

A properly programmed computerized system could theoretically be developed to handle the variety of options which are presently available. However, the pre-pharmacy student would by the nature of the computer's rationale have been prevented from registering as he did. This, in effect strips the individual of his autonomy and leaves decision making to the impersonal binary determination of a computer. Thus, an efficient and "fair" operation may well be in conflict with values commonly mis-labeled "humanistic", i.e. respect for individual autonomy, freedom or sovereignty.

Issue #2: Collegial Autonomy

Departmental Objections

Although even the broad outline of proposed computerized systems had never

been explicated, administrative officials of many colleges and departments voiced concern during interviews that their autonomy in making registration related decisions was threatened by the introduction of computer registration. Their concerns were usually expressed in terms of the uniqueness of their student population, that "our students have different kinds of problems than others, and therefore we attempt to tailor our procedures for them" (i.e. Education seniors often have supervised teaching time commitments around which they must add schedules.) In at least one case, variant procedures were rationalized on the basis of the need to exercise unit autonomy. "We were the first to use an alphabet system (for ordering sequence of student registration), why should we change our alphabet order to match CLA's decision." In a few cases at the departmental level, computerized registration was seen as a way in which the central administration would be able to put pressure on departments to offer courses on a student "demand" basis which may be contrary to department desires. Vast variability exists between departments in their acceptance of the premise that class offerings should reflect student demand. Whatever the legal, historical or logical basis of the desire for unit autonomy in this matter may be, it must be recognized in the implementation of any new system. The imposition of any rigid centralized plan could result in the proliferation of a dual registration system, i.e. a special system for the members of a collegial unit and then a pro forma replication of the activity for the all University registration. Presently, versions of a dual system take place in the Business School with its closed 3-day registration program and in early registration in several schools on the St. Paul campus. Obviously, such practices would negate much of the justification in terms of cost and time saving for the implementation of a computerized system.

It is apparent, however, that even under the present system, there is the need for improved articulation of decisions made by sub-system administrative units. This may mean the development of a specialized role within central administration with sufficient authority to enforce binding arbitration of differences of registration procedures. Such a role is especially important in cases where disagreements result in difficulties for students. How can one justify the necessity of a student fortunate enough to have an early registration date in one collegiate unit returning to the campus at a later time in order to register for a class in another unit merely because of differing registration procedures?

Issue #3

Mythology of Registration

One of the early beliefs about University life engrained into the incoming student is the idea of the difficulties to be experienced in registration. The catalogue of these reputed difficulties includes long lines, closed classes, much waiting, inordinate amounts of walking from building to building, office to office, to be confronted by unavailable or unknowledgeable advisors and unresponsive bureaucrats. The data does not support this view of the process. However, a basic element of the popular view of the university concerns the difficulty of registration. Several years ago, in a study of orientation programs, it was noted by this author that entering freshmen were so overwhelmingly concerned about registration, that the value of other orientation activities was essentially mitigated. In most cases, the incoming student arrived with this concern, but the orientation session, aimed at assisting the neophyte to learn about the University, however well intentioned, contained many references about University bureaucracy in general and registration difficulties in particular. Tips on how to make registration easier at minimum imply that the process is difficult.

Whatever the historical basis of the belief, in the course of the present study few long lines were observed and generally there was a conscious effort on the part of University staff members involved in registration to assist students by pointing out alternatives when problems arose. This was noted especially in the class reservation room of CLA where workers were generous in offering information about classes which might be substituted when a desired class or section was unavailable. This is not to deny that the process involves delays and difficulties for some. However, the data indicate that the view of registration as an ordeal of serious magnitude cannot be accepted.

The myth is, however, carefully perpetuated, and passed on to each incoming cohort of students. One may then seriously question if there might be some functional basis for the emergence and perpetuation of this myth. The act of registering represents a clear-cut social statement which affirms and reaffirms membership in that social category labeled "student". In American society, membership in this social status is still largely achieved, not ascribed. Therefore, it becomes essential to have social markers which publicly state this special status. Passing through the real or imagined ordeal of registration represents such a marker and becomes a functional requirement.

Ritualized events which provide public statements of an individual's changing social status are generally categorized as rites of passage. Although events falling under this rubric are usually thought of as traditional life crisis activities such as pubescence or marriage, registration clearly falls within the criteria of this concept. It is a life crisis, because the initial act of registering represents a major shift in status to inclusion in a well-defined and separate social category distinct from that formerly occupied by the individual and a status that others have not achieved. Subsequent registrations reaffirm this status. Van Gennap's (1960)

classic analysis of ritualized crisis events (Rites of Passage) distinguished three major phases: separation, transition, and incorporation. Clearly, registration falls within the scope of incorporative activities of this conceptualization.

From this point of view, registration takes on a social meaning clearly outside that of the technical act of establishing a contractual arrangement between the individual and the University. The genesis of difficulties experienced in registration may well have risen out of faulty technical acts, but the necessity for perpetuating a myth imputing special ordeal-like characteristics to the process may well stem from the social significance of the act.

Chapple (1942) has made a further clarifying distinction between rites of initiation and rites of intensification. Initiation rites are activities focusing on change conditions of individuals while intensification rites deal with systemic changes. "This acting out of the ordered interaction of the members has the effect of reinforcing or intensifying their habitual relations, and thus serves to maintain their conditioned responses (507)... Rites of intensification make up the great periodic ceremonies of a society... which provide the framework in which the interaction of the institution is to a large extent ordered and controlled (508)." Thus, registration can be viewed as a rite of passage from a student point of view as he marks with a social act his special status as a student. It is also a rite of intensification because it is a cyclical activity which restores systemic equilibrium. Students are required to relate to University bureaucracy in prescribed ways, departments must coordinate their activities to other departments and to their college administration and on the collegial level, individual units who normally never or seldom communicate or articulate in any way are forced to do so during the course of these activities.

With these views in mind, we are in a position to question the consequences of a major change in institutional behavior which computerization portends.

If students are viewed by both themselves and wider society as a distinct social category (without necessarily attaching any hierarchical connotation to this distinction), the induction into this category must be marked by having performed some special act or achieved some special knowledge. Part of the mythology of a difficult registration undoubtedly stems from students' needs to believe they have passed through something special. While registration is not the only social marker of studenthood, it is an action which can be pointed to as singularly demarcating an individual as a participant in this category. In this light, it is more than just idle speculation to question the social consequences of removing the ritualistic activities involved in registration.

Whatever the rhetoric to the contrary, University membership is indeed a separate if not elite social category, and the achievement of new statuses is inevitably marked by special activities. What will emerge to substitute for registration as the significant social event it now is? Admittedly, computerized registration is still an event, but the logic of efficiency is to make it as undisturbing an event as possible. Without such marking and the sense of having achieved a special status, then the boundaries of membership in this category become so diffuse that recruitment and retention become difficult. On a practical level, the concern over student attrition at the collegiate level is intimately tied with this conceptualization. Demonstrable shifts in University attendance patterns in the past decade have taken place as illustrated by the social acceptance if not ideal of dropping out "to get my head together" or to take some time to "mellow out."

Issue #4

Registration as a Socialization Procedure

We have noted that the cyclical nature of registration with the life of the University provides a periodic coalescence of certain types of systemic activities which function as rites of passage and rites of intensification. A further function of these activities is that of socializing the individual to the norms and values of the institution. Under the present system at registration time, the student is required to interact with many more parts of the University structure than is necessary in the normal course of class activity. In the course of doing so he learns much about institutional assumptions concerning students' positions within the structure and expected behavior norms.

For the most part, official and public administrative postures are clearly spelled out in various regulations, rules, and even the physical layout of the reservation process. Yet one is struck by the amount of deviance from these rules that take place. An examination of the kinds of discrepancies that exist indicates much of the operational value system of the institution which is encoded within the student each time he registers.

College catalogues list a set of prerequisites for enrollment in any class. Yet at no place in the current registration process is there a check to see if the individual fulfills the listed prerequisites. Typically, administrators and faculty feel that merely listing them in the catalogue is sufficient to indicate to students the level of preparation expected. If the student chooses to ignore these prerequisites, he does so at his own risk. Yet it is common knowledge among students and faculty alike that the prerequisites are neither enforced nor directly enforceable. The attentive individual quickly learns that bluff, aggressiveness or chutzpah pays off. As one departmental secretary said, "There are always ways for a

student to accomplish anything if he is willing to walk and talk long enough. The ones I feel sorry for are those who follow the rules to the letter or are too timid to ask. Those are the ones that I will usually give tips to about ways of getting around the rules." The philosophy student cited previously was able to circumvent the rules only with the tacit approval of a good many people along the line.

The University of Minnesota is a large and bureaucratic institution. Its very size at once creates an environment of great potential resources but immense social scale. One successful survival strategy is to utilize the inevitable interstices within the bureaucratic structure. These fissures include lack of communication between various offices and units, lack of clear cut boundaries of unit responsibility, and disjuncture of rules between the units. One technique is playing off one against the other. Another is to ignore the rules of one unit that subsequent units contacted assume is not their responsibility. While a variety of opportunities exists to do this during the course of a student's career, it is during registration that the process is collapsed. Registration provides a periodic short course in this method of survival and its attendant premises.

The recognition of the implicit expectation that some, if not many, students are at minimum bending the overt procedural rules was expressed by a CLA department chairman. "There is a fiction of the necessity of following rules (in the registration process). The listing of prerequisites contributes to this myth. In some senses, the myth that we are all following the rules is the glue that keeps the whole place together."

Earlier we have indicated the inherent contradiction possible if in our zeal to become efficient the registration process is to be rigidified so that students who are now able to solve their problems themselves are forced into seeking additional adjudicatory help. This contradiction emerges at another

level if we consider registration procedures as latent educative devices in learning individual autonomy and self-direction. In the example of the pre-pharmacy student his individual judgment that he could register for classes in overlapping class times would, by the very nature of the definition of the problem or the nature of the purpose of the computer's assistance, have been ruled out. A question arises over the effect of stripping the individual student of his autonomy and leaving the decision to a computer.

As it is now carried out, during registration most students visit individuals and offices at locations within the University which they ordinarily do not contact. In a sense, it momentarily, but periodically, requires the individual to expand his social and physical space within the institution. However inefficient such a process of learning and relearning about the University may be, it functionally accomplishes this end. Moves to further isolate and mechanize individual student relations with the University bureaucracy as exemplified by the proposed computerization of registration may be counter-productive to other attempts to develop programs to ameliorate this very real problem of social and physical isolation among numbers of students.

Conclusion

One of the reasons for the implementation of a computerized system of registration has been that it would make the process easier for the student. It is a common belief that the present system involves students in undue delays and inequalities. Whatever the basis for this belief in the past, this study of registration for fall quarter 1973 did not reveal this to be an accurate view of the situation. Even if the time individuals must presently devote were to be shortened, if would be necessary to demonstrate that a more mechanistic system would not be dysfunctional to other valued attributes of the institution-

student relationship. As a social process, registration was viewed in this paper to possess important functional attributes in incorporating members and educating them into many implicit, but operative, values within the institution. Questions have been raised as to the potential impact on the institution's social life with the introduction of a major change in student-administrative relationships.

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TABLE 1

TIME REQUIREMENTS

	HOURS SPENT REGISTERING	HOURS SPENT DECIDING ON COURSES
No response	.6%	11.0%
Less than 1 hour	13.5	38.1
1-3 hours	47.7	31.6
3-5 hours	14.8	9.7
5-6 hours	7.7	- -
6+ hours	15.5	9.6
	100.0%	100.0%

NOTE: Percentages refer to number of total sample reporting this category. N=155

TABLE II

SPECIFIC TIME REQUIREMENTS

TIME SPENT:

	Getting Registration Materials	Seeing Advisor	Getting Special Approval	In Class Reservation Process	Reserving Classes in Other Colleges
NO RESPONSE	12.9%	7.7***	26.5***	9.0	22.6***
1-15 minutes	45.2	18.7	11.0	57.4	11.0
15-30 minutes	14.8	15.5	3.2	20.0	7.7
31-45 minutes	1.3	8.4	2.6	3.9	0
46-60 minutes	10.3	3.2	3.9	6.5	1.3
61+ minutes	7.7	8.4	4.5	2.6	.6
NONE REQUIRED	-	-	48.4	.6	56.8
DON'T SPEND TIME WITH ADVISOR*	-	38.1	-	-	-
OBTAINED AT ORIENTATION **	7.7	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

N=155

* Applicable to column 2

** Applicable to column 1

*** Probably the majority of these responses are in reality part of "none required."

TABLE III

SOURCES OF SCHEDULING CONFLICT

Time conflict with other classes	4.5%
Time conflict with personal schedule	3.0%
Class closed	39.0%
Other	4.0%
No conflict or not applicable	64.5%

N=154